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BOOK REVIEWS

Literature in the Common Schools. By JOHN HARRINGTON COX. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1908. Pp. viii+227. \$0.90.

Our first impression of this book was that Professor Cox had been "at a great feast of languages and stolen the scraps." Professor Cox has, indeed, drawn much of his material from sources that may be called common property, yet he has so ably digested this material and so interfused it with the spirit of helpfulness for the grade teacher that we shall let our carping critical attitude pass with the quotation which Moth made to Costard. It is, in fact, no mean thing to dig up the old familiar generalities and platitudes about "Literature and Life," "Why Study Literature?" "Criticism," "The Emotional Element," "Imagination," "Thought," "Form," "Tributaries of the Literary Stream," and the other hazy distinctions and definitions which delight summer-school gatherings and literary assemblies. Such a course of study does not, we wish to say, imply necessarily that superficiality is its distinguishing mark. On the contrary it means that many persons—even many of our teachers in the grades—who are not privileged to take a thorough course in literary work are entitled to establish a background of the literary activity which has manifested itself in the world, and to feel that literature is not a mere matter of dictionary chasing and literary parsing. To obtain a wider, a more penetrating, a more sympathetic understanding—a more philosophical basis, if you will—of the manifold influences that lie behind all literary expression, thereby awakening and stirring the deeper consciousness of the permanent and universal elements in literature, is no small matter. So, if we may turn right about face on our quotation, we may say that Professor Cox has made a feast of the scraps. Many teachers who read this pleasant little book will feel that they have come into a new realm.

But Professor Cox does not devote all of his book to pretty little meta-physical distinctions and dissertations. Much of the book is of practical use. He gives an intelligent model lesson founded on Holmes's "Old Ironsides," discusses very thoroughly a course of study in literature for the grades, makes suggestions for memorizing, and gives many ideas and titles for selections in reading. The list of books made for further readings and for the prescribed course is enhanced in value by naming the publisher of each book and stating the price. If the teachers of the grades will take this book in the way of a suggestive course, and will not attempt to dose their pupils with its many nice, sometimes dogmatic, assertions, they will find it a good book for their daily use.

The Pearl. A Middle English Poem. A Modern Version, in the Meter of the Original. By SOPHIE JEWETT. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell & Co., 1908. Pp. 16. \$0.40,

This beautiful elegy, our earliest *In Memoriam*, is seemingly coming to its own again. It was first given to the public in its original language by Morris in